

Message Text

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ACTION PM-04

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 ACDA-07 NSC-05 SP-02
SS-15 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 L-03 MC-02 EB-07
COME-00 TRSE-00 OMB-01 IGA-02 AID-05 DODE-00 /083 W
-----262220Z 052999 /62

R 260910Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8142
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
USCINCEUR
COMIDEASTFOR

C O N F I D E N T I A L KUWAIT 2914

USCINCEUR FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: MASS, KU, UK
SUBJECT: BRITISH MILITARY SALES TO KUWAIT

REF: (A) KUWAIT 2627 (NOTAL), (B) KUWAIT 2500 (NOTAL).

1. BRITISH EMBOFF TOLD US FOLLOWING MAY 25 REGARDING
MILITARY SALES BY HMG TO KUWAIT:
A. ON MAY 24, HMG SIGNED MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
WITH KUWAIT DEFMIN (NOW VISITING UK) BY WHICH HMG
UNDERTOOK TO PROVIDE TRAINING AND SUPPORT SERVICES ASSOCIATED
WITH THE PENDING SALE FO 10 VOSPER THORNEYCRAFT PATROL CRAFT TO
GOK. THERE WILL BE NO PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT OF THIS TRANSACTION. THE
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANING INVISIONS TRAINING
(IN BRITAIN) OF SOME 600 ENLISTED MEN, STRETCHING OVER
THREE YEARS, WITH THE BOATS BEING OFFICERED INITIALLY BY
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PAKISTANI AND BRITISH OFFICERS. (THE KUWAITIS ALSO HAVE BEEN
TALKING TO THE EGYPTIANS ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF SOME TRAINING
OF SAILORS IN EGYPT, WHCIH THE BRITISH MILITARY WOULD WELCOME,
REDUCING THE OBLIGATION OF HMG TO UNDERTAKE THE TRAINING.)
B. THE BRITISH-KUWAIT MEMORANDUM, INVOLVING HMG
IN TRAINING AND SUPPORT, WAS A PRECONDITION TO THE GOK SIGNING A
PURCHASE CONTRACT FOR THE 10 PATROL CRAFT, BUT THE SIGING WILL BE

FURTHER DELAYED EVEN SO. THE BRITISH EXPECT LENGTHY, DIFFICULT NEGOTIATIONS OVER THE PRICES OF THE BOATS, WEAPONS AND EQUIPMENT. THE FIRST VESSEL PROBABLY WILL BE DELIVERED SOME THREE YEARS FROM DATE OF CONTRACT, AND AN ADDITIONAL ONE EACH THREE MONTHS THEREAFTER.

C. THE FRENCH STAND TO GAIN MOST. AS REPORTED REF B, THE KUWAITIS HAVE INDICATED THAT THEY WANT VOSPER THORNEYCRAFT TO INSTALL FRENCH MISSILE SYSTEM (EXOCET) AND FIRE CONTROL SYSTEM (THOMPSON), WHICH TOGETHER AMOUNT TO SOME 50 PERCENT OF THE VALUE OF THE VESSELS. THE BRITISH SHARE WOULD BE ONLY SOME 50PCT, BUT THE BRITISH ARE HAPPY IN ANY CASE, GIVEN THE ECONOMIC BENEFITS AND THE "PRESENTATIONAL" EFFECT OF SELLING PATROL CRAFT IN THE GULF. GERMAN ENGINES AND US GUNS WOULD ROUND OUT THE VESSELS'S COMPONENTS, BUT SWEDISH GUNS (BOFORS) WOULD PROBABLY BE SUBSTITUTED IF THE CHOSEN US SUPPLIER (EMERSON) WERE NOT ABLE TO EXPORT, DUE TO NEW USG ARMS EXPORT RESTRAINTS.

D. THE KUWAITI NAVAL BASE, NOW UNDER JAPANESE CONSTRUCTION WITH BRITISH CONSULTING FIRM, IS SLATED TO BE COMPLETED IN SPRING 1979, WELL IN ADVANCE OF FIRST PATROL CRAFT DELIVERY.

2. KUWAITI PRESS REPORTS TO THE EFFECT THAT THE GOK IS INTERESTED IN PURCHASING BRITISH ARTILLERY, JAGUAR AIRCRAFT, AND TANKS

ADDITIONAL TO THE 165 CHIEFTAINS NOW ON ORDER, ARE GROUNDLESS, ACCORDING TO BRITISH EMBOFF. HE ALSO CONFIRMED EARLIER REPORTS THAT THE KUWAITI DEFMIN WILL VISIT AN INTEGRATED BRITISH AIR DEFENSE COMMAND AND CONTROL CENTER, DURING HIS CURRENT TRIP, IN CONNECTION WITH KUWAITI INTEREST IN ACQUIRING SUCH A CENTER. NO BRITISH FIRMS HAVE BEEN INVITED TO BID ON

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SUCH EQUIPMENT YET, HOWEVER.

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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